

Cincinnati's city manager will start negotiating soon on the contract with the Port of Cincinnati Development Authority now that City Council has designated half the future casino proceeds for economic development.

The port will become the city's economic development contractor, the city the client. And the priorities set by council Wednesday gives half the expected \$20

million from the casino annually to the port starting in 2013 and ongoing for 15 years. Another 25 percent will go to operate the streetcar.

Economic development has been a priority for the mayor and the manager since they walked in the door, said Meg Olberding, City Manager Milton Dohoney's spokeswoman. This gives us a dedicated revenue stream.

Here's how the Cincinnati voting went on the city's casino revenue:

□ Councilman Cecil Thomas was the only vote against giving half the expected proceeds for 15 years to the Port of Cincinnati Development Authority. The motion to do that also included giving \$1 million each to the port next year and in 2012, a pilot economic development program in Oakley proposed by Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls, and Councilman Charlie Winburn's dream neighborhoods idea to focus economic development on 10 to-be-chosen neighborhoods. Thomas said he thought more money should be directed at people, rather than things. Quinlivan pointed out that the jobs created by the port would help people.

□ Thomas, with Republicans Chris Monzel and Leslie Ghiz, voted against the idea to give 14 percent of the money to city facilities, 10 percent to decks over Fort Washington Way and 1 percent to Quinlivan's idea for outdoor sculptures and a citizen-judged contest of the sculptures.

□ Monzel, Ghiz and Winburn voted against giving money to the \$128 million streetcar, a project all three oppose. Ghiz said she didn't think it was fair to the public for the vote to take place without residents being given a chance to weigh in.

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□ Councilman Chris Bortz didnt vote on the streetcar part. He is excused from voting after an Ohio Ethics Commission opinion said his familys properties along and near the streetcar route mean Bortz stands to gain more from the streetcar than average residents would.

The votes all were taken on motions, rather than ordinances. Motions are nonbinding, meaning the council members in place between now and 2013 could enact different priorities.

The decisions came after Mayor Mark Mallory held meetings behind closed doors with various groups of council members.

Enquirer attorney Jack Greiner said he thinks those meetings violated Ohio open-meetings laws because they were serial meetings about the same agenda item designed to get consensus. Serial or round-robin meetings were ruled illegal by the Ohio Supreme Court in 1995.

Mallory could not be reached Thursday.

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